

# Appendix J: Accessibility Levels in Staffordshire

## Introduction

Many people are excluded from much of what the county has to offer. Key statistics about the groups most likely to experience difficulty accessing jobs, services and activities in Staffordshire are outlined below and more information is provided in the LTP's Equality Impact Assessment (see Appendix F). Also summarised below is information relating to the main destinations people have most difficulty accessing in Staffordshire.

## Groups of People most likely to have Barriers to Access

### People with a Disability

Almost 120,000 people in Staffordshire have a physical or sensory disability,<sup>1</sup> 18% (148,004) of residents describe themselves as having a limiting long-term illness<sup>2</sup> and 41,670 people claim Disability Living Allowance (any disabling condition). Whilst it depends on the type of disability, people with a disability tend to have a higher reliance on specialist transport services, such as taxis, community transport, demand responsive transport and non-emergency patient transport.

### People on Low Income

Staffordshire falls into the 10% to 20% most deprived county council areas nationally in terms of income deprivation, with an estimated 92,367 people classed as income deprived<sup>3</sup>. In 2008 the average workplace based wage level was £18,733, which was 4% lower than the regional and 11% lower than the national averages. A report commissioned by the DfT suggests that there are high levels of car ownership amongst low-income households, with car costs being consistently given a higher priority compared to other household costs<sup>4</sup>.

### The Young

People under the age of 16 years have to rely on walking, cycling and public transport to get around, or be reliant on parents and friends for any journeys by car. In Staffordshire there are 148,928 people aged under 16 years, representing 18% of the total population<sup>5</sup>. The Children and Young People's Plan for Staffordshire highlights a number of priorities that transport can contribute towards including making jobs, training, education, and other services and facilities for young people easily accessible<sup>6</sup>.

### The Elderly

Declining driving ability and financial constraints mean that many older motorists have to adjust their travel habits and at some point, may have to give up driving altogether. At the age of 70 years, holders of British driving licences must renew their licence, with the holder requiring to meet a minimum eyesight requirement and able to say that they are not prevented from driving for any reason. A renewed licence will normally be valid for three years; each time it requires renewal, the holder must meet set criteria<sup>7</sup>.

A high proportion of older people are dependent on public transport, taxis and lifts from family and friends. Some elderly people who have mobility difficulties may also require specialist transport services, such as community transport, demand responsive transport and non-emergency patient transport.

There are 145,700 people aged 65 years or over in Staffordshire, representing 17.6% of the total population<sup>8</sup>. By 2028, this age group is expected to make up 25.6% of the county's population.

**People Living in Rural Areas**

People living in rural areas not only have a limited choice of services and jobs but fewer travel choices and higher transport costs to reach them. Overall the majority of Staffordshire's rural population, approximately 236,500, is mobile as car ownership levels are high, standing at 88% of households. However, in rural non-car owning households - which represents 12% of total rural households - feeling of isolation can be high as it is more difficult to access services or to get out and visit family and friends.

**People who do not have Access to a Private Motor Vehicle**

The car is the dominant mode of transport for the majority of Staffordshire's residents with 81% of households owning at least one. Over two-fifths (43%) of households have just one car and in these households, it is often the case that one member of the household uses the car for most of the day and so it is generally not available to other members of the household. As 75% of the county's households are occupied by more than one person, it is reasonable to assume that this is a problem for a significant number of households. It is likely that many of these people change their travel behaviour to fit around the availability of the car (and/or driver) or rely upon public transport, taxis and lifts from family and friends.

**People Living in Deprived Areas**

There are few areas in Staffordshire that have a high level of multiple deprivation<sup>9</sup>. Only six of the 525 Lower Super Output Areas<sup>10</sup> (LSOAs) in Staffordshire are in the top 10% most deprived areas in England for multiple deprivation (2007). This represents just over 1% of all areas in Staffordshire and around 8,000 people. The six LSOAs are the wards of Cross Heath, Glascote, Eton Park, Knutton and Silverdale, Shobnall, and Chesterton. A further 60,000+ people live within the 40 LSOAs that fall in the next most deprived group (10% to 20% most deprived areas). The causes of deprivation are complex; tackling it will require action to be taken not just in activities relating to transport but across a number of policy areas and by a range of agencies.

**Main Destination Types People have most Difficulty Accessing in Staffordshire**

**Access to Towns**

The ability to access town centres means that a range of needs - retail, financial, education, employment and leisure - can be met in a single trip. On the whole, access to town centres is relatively easy for most people assuming they have no mobility issues. The characteristics of the population within and outside 30 and 60 minutes travel time (by bus) to Staffordshire's main town centres are shown in Table J1.

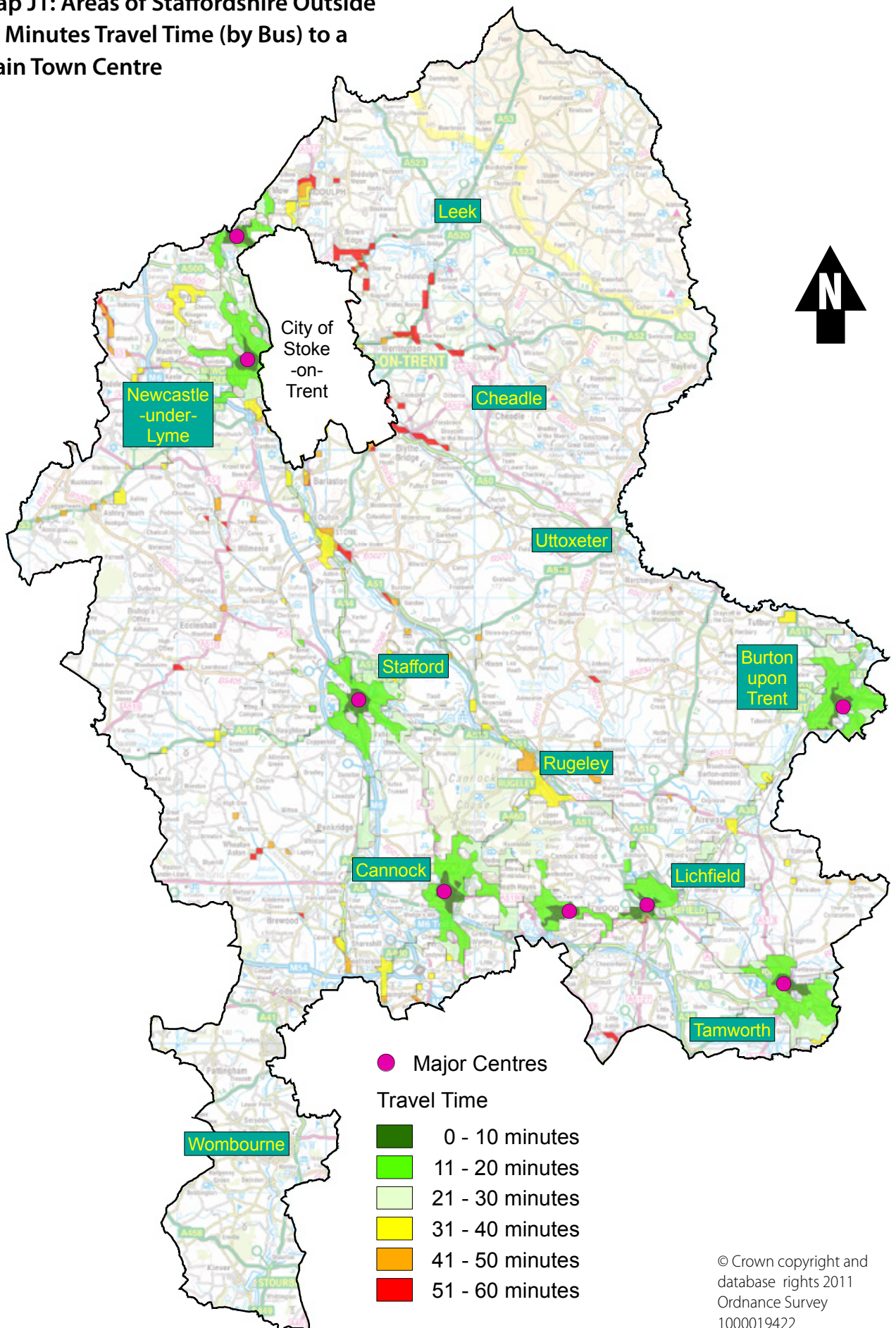
The population that lies outside 60 minutes travel time to a main town centre is dispersed across the county as shown in Map J1 and presents a challenge in terms of identifying and meeting the accessibility needs of this population.

**Table J1: Access to Town Centres**

Travel Bands	Characteristics of the Population	
	Total Population	Households with No Car
Within 30 minutes	48.6%	59.3%
Within 60 minutes	59.2%	70.0%
Outside 60 minutes	40.8%	30.0%

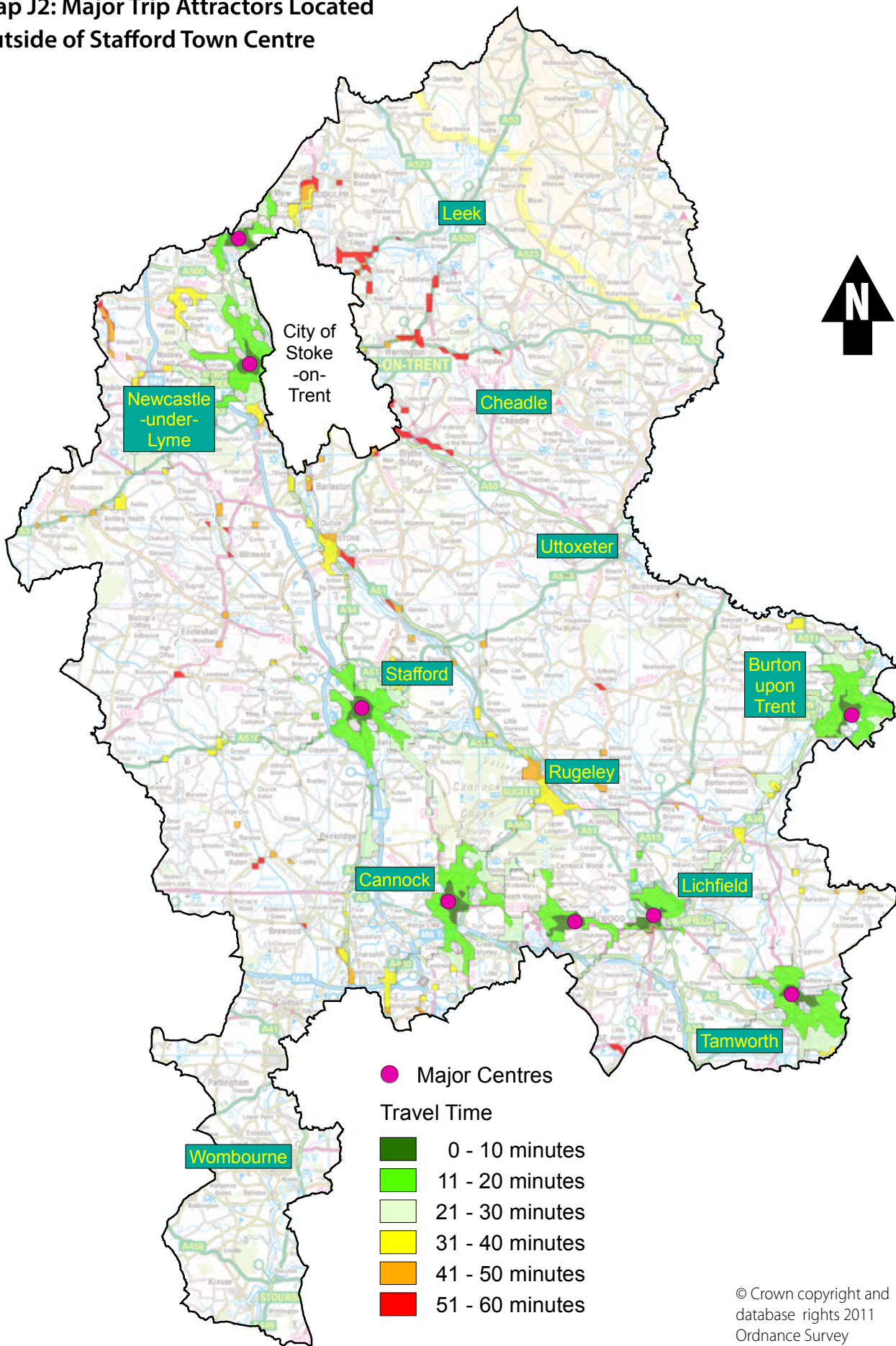
Access to locations outside of town centres is also problematic, particularly with the growth of out-of-town retail and employment sites. For example, Staffordshire University and Stafford Hospital, plus the Hough, Queens, Madford, Greyfriars and Friary retail parks are all major trip attractors located outside of Stafford town centre as shown on Map J2.

**Map J1: Areas of Staffordshire Outside 60 Minutes Travel Time (by Bus) to a Main Town Centre**





### Map J2: Major Trip Attractors Located Outside of Stafford Town Centre



## Access to Employment

There are two main problems relating to access to employment in Staffordshire. The first one relates to patterns of work; part-time and shift work, together with a range of flexible working practices, presents difficulties in the provision of public transport services because at best, many start and finish times fall outside public transport peak travel times and at worst, many fall outside public transport operating hours. Whilst we only have anecdotal evidence of this issue, we consider it to be a real problem for a significant proportion of Staffordshire's population.

The second problem relates to getting to more inaccessible employment locations. Staffordshire has large employers - including Britannia Building Society, Birmingham Midshires, JCB, the NHS, Northern Foods, and Alton Towers - and many more smaller employers - on industrial estates, at quarries and farms - located in rural areas where public transport services are more limited. However, as highlighted above, employment sites do not need to be in rural areas to be inaccessible; sites located on the edge of towns can be equally inaccessible. It is estimated that 24% of Staffordshire's workforce work in rural locations.

## Access to Healthcare

Inadequate public transport is by far the most frequently mentioned transport problem identified by people who have difficulty getting to healthcare facilities such as GP

surgeries and hospitals. Other access issues include the location of facilities, parking difficulties, limited access to specialist transport services for those with mobility difficulties such as non-emergency patient transport, and under-resourced community transport services. A further issue relating specifically to hospitals is that many patients do not necessarily travel to their nearest hospital or hospitals within the county for treatment because certain treatments are not available at all hospitals. For example, many residents in southern Staffordshire travel to hospitals within the West Midlands Conurbation.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that many people in the county have missed, turned down or chosen not to seek medical help because of transport problems. Health agencies say that missed appointments and delayed patient discharge from hospitals due to transport problems is a significant issue and cost to the health service.

The characteristics of the population within and outside 30 and 60 minutes travel time (by bus) to a GP surgery and a hospital are shown in Tables J2 and J3 respectively.

The population that lies outside 60 minutes travel time (by bus) to a GP surgery and a hospital is dispersed across the county as shown in Maps J3 and J4, and again this presents a challenge in terms of identifying and meeting the accessibility needs of this population.

**Table J2: Access to GP Surgeries**

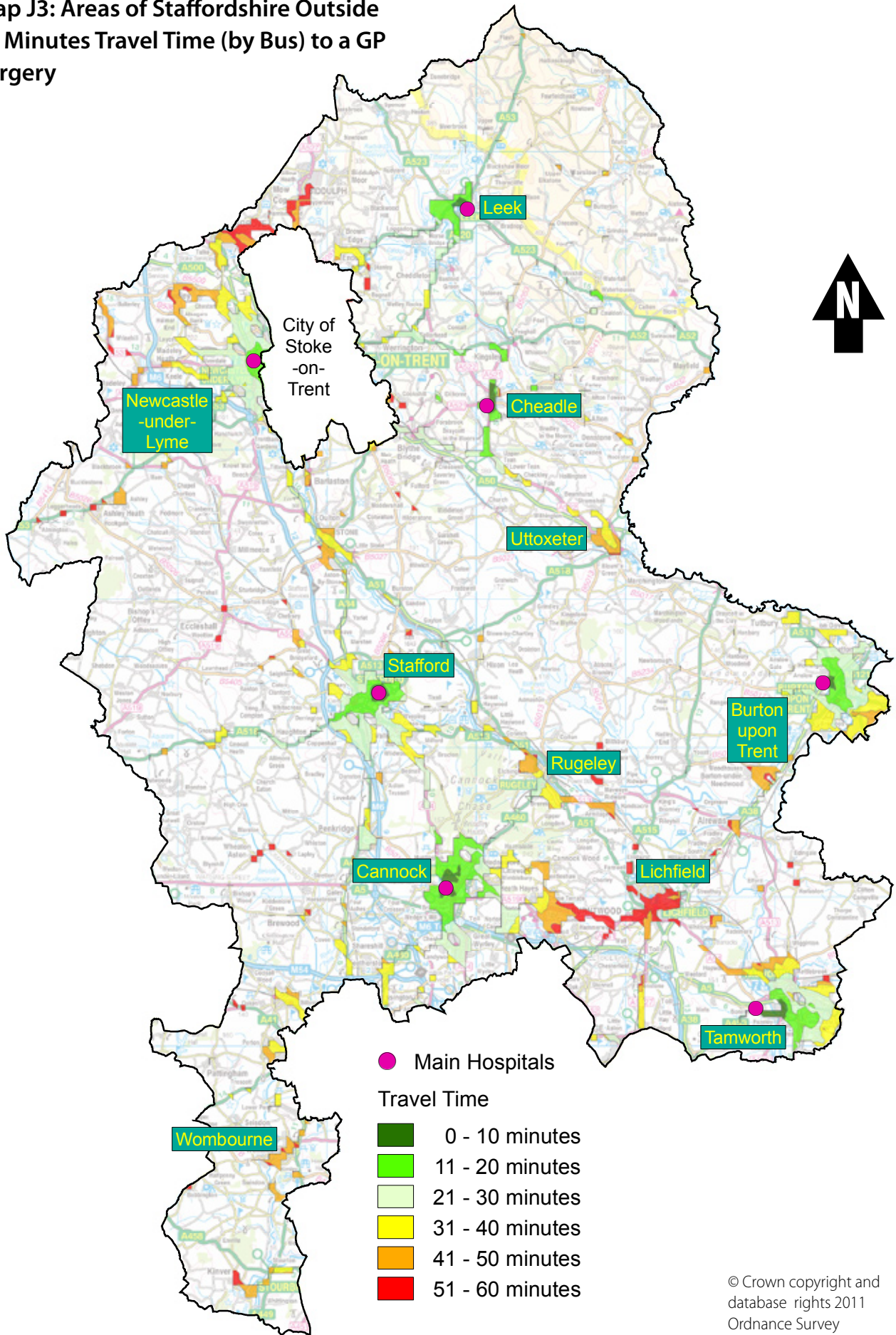
Travel Bands	Characteristics of the Population	
	Total Population	Households with No Car
Within 30 minutes	67.4%	79.8%
Within 60 minutes	69.9%	81.8%
Outside 60 minutes	30.1%	18.2%

**Table J3: Access to a Hospital**

Travel Bands	Characteristics of the Population	
	Total Population	Households with No Car
Within 30 minutes	33.3%	44.0%
Within 60 minutes	64.3%	76.3%
Outside 60 minutes	35.7%	23.7%

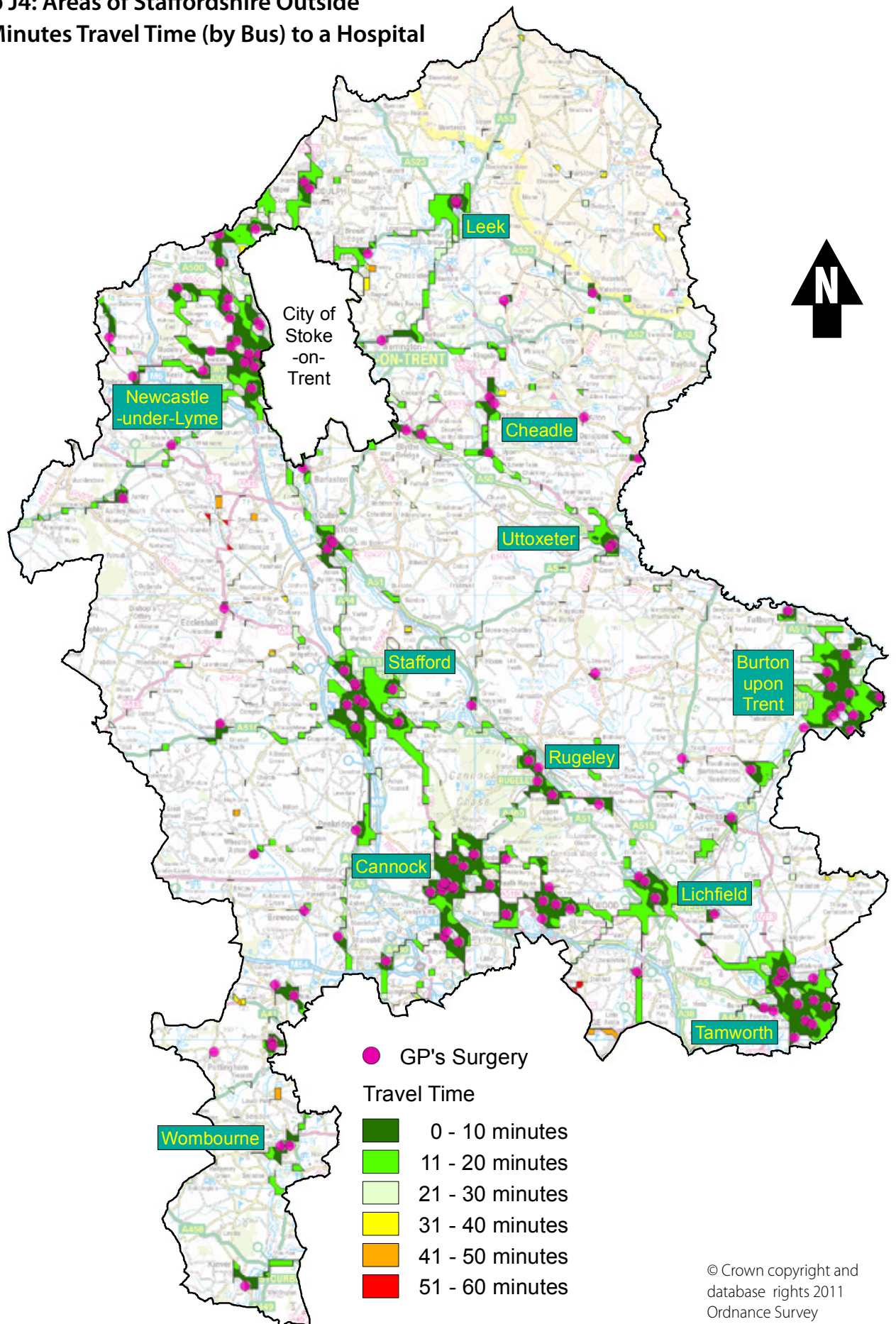


**Map J3: Areas of Staffordshire Outside 60 Minutes Travel Time (by Bus) to a GP Surgery**



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**Map J4: Areas of Staffordshire Outside  
60 Minutes Travel Time (by Bus) to a Hospital**





## Access to Healthy Foods

In recent decades there has been an increase in the development of out-of-town supermarkets and a reduction in the number of local food shops. This can be an important factor for those population groups that rely heavily on accessing their food locally such as the elderly, those with mobility difficulties and those without access to a private motor vehicle, and is compounded in some areas by a lack of adequate and accessible public transport.

Access to healthy foods, such as fruit and vegetables, is vital for the health of the population. In Staffordshire, 9.5% of 4 and 5 year olds, 19% of 10 and 11 year olds<sup>11</sup>, and over 27% of adults are obese<sup>12</sup>. Access to healthy foods, together with an increase in physical activity (such as walking and cycling), will help to improve the health and mental well-being of Staffordshire's population. Unfortunately due to inadequate data on shops selling fruit and vegetables, an accessibility analysis is impossible.

1 *The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities.*

2 *The census definition of a limiting long-term illness is somewhat general and is said to represent any long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits daily activities or work.*

3 *Index of multiple deprivation - income deprivation domain is considered to be one of the most important aspects of deprivation. This domain measures the percentage of people living in low-income households.*

4 *The travel choices and needs of low-income households: the role of the car, National Centre for Social Research (2009).*

5 *2008 mid-year estimates.*

6 *www.staffordshirechildrenstrust.org.uk/cypp*

7 *www.direct.gov.uk/en/Motoring/Motoringtransactions/BeforeyouapplyD/DG\_066956*

8 *2008 mid-year estimates.*

9 *The Multiple Deprivation index (2007) brings together 38 different indicators grouped into seven domains. These seven domains are combined to produce a measure of multiple deprivation; however it is important to note that the domains are weighted and therefore do not contribute equally to the overall, multiple measure.*

10 *There are 32,482 Lower Super Output Areas in the country, each one equates to roughly around 1,500 people. There are 525 LSOAs in Staffordshire.*

11 *National Child Measurement Programme (2007/08).*

12 *2003-2005 estimate.*

13 *Leisure and recreation includes access to open space, play and sporting facilities, countryside, arts and culture, community activities.*

## Access to Leisure and Recreation<sup>13</sup>

The demand for leisure and recreation is growing across all population groups, including the retired, the young, and those with a disability. An ageing population increases need and demand for a full range of leisure pursuits throughout the day, whilst young people in Staffordshire want better access to high quality leisure, cultural and sport experiences in the evenings and at weekends.